

PATTERN INSPECTION METHOD AND INSPECTION APPARATUS

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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A pattern inspection method and a pattern inspection apparatus, which are able to detect a killer defect as a defect candidate and also reduce considerably the number of non-killer defects detected as a defect candidate, have been disclosed, wherein a differential image of two patterns to be compared is calculated, with the polarities included, and after the absolute value of the differential image is compared with a first threshold value to detect the part as a defect candidate, the polarities of the differential image of the part of the defect candidate are inspected and the part of one of the polarities is judged as a defect candidate.